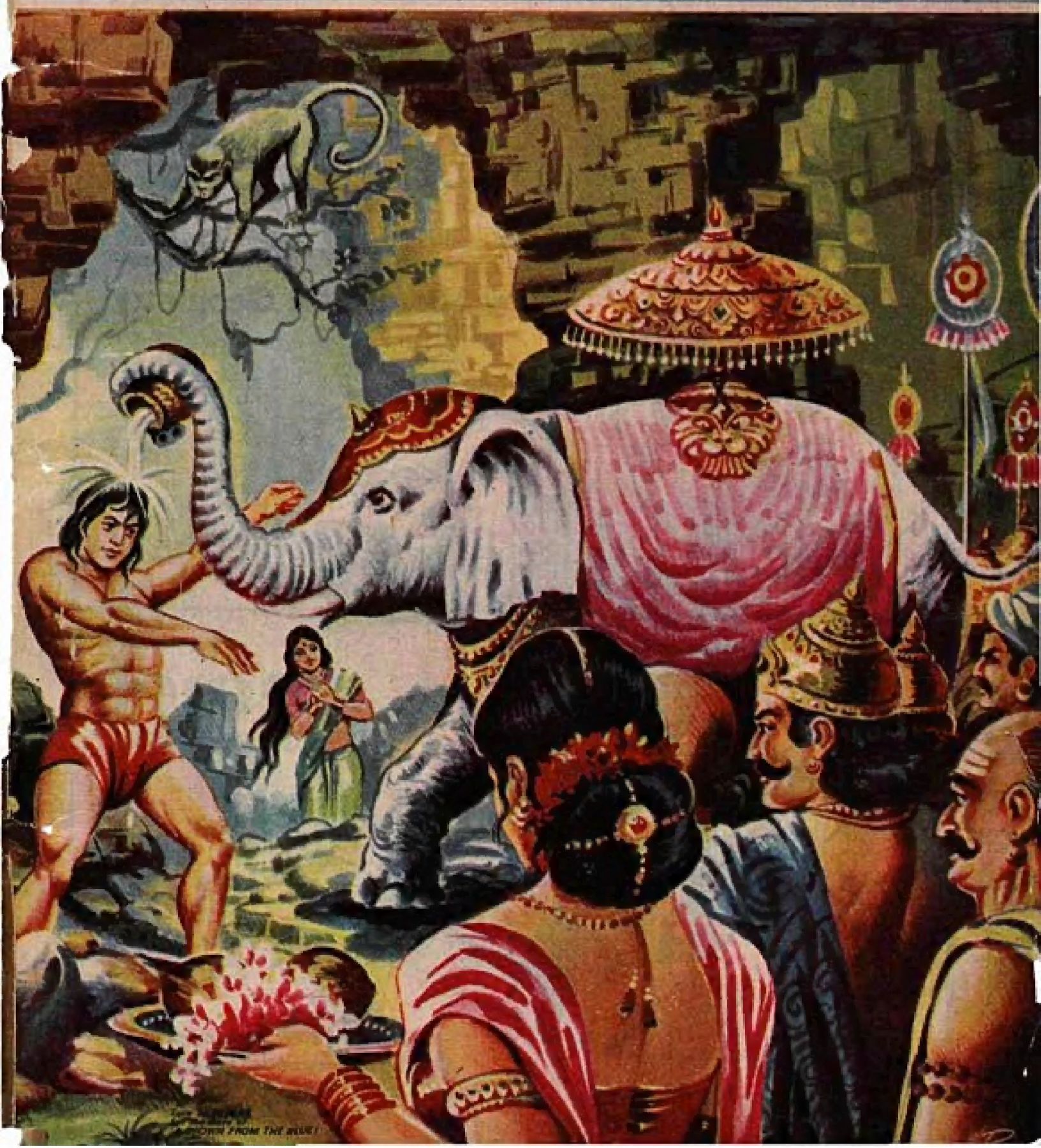


# CHANDAMAMA

APRIL 1980

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# Mina Hated Geometry

Nothing was tiring and boring like Geometry for Mina

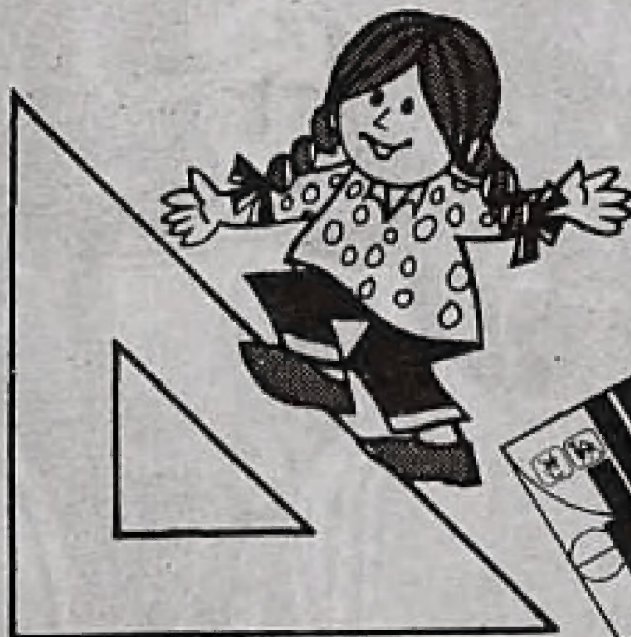
It never interested her. Those acute and obtuse angles, those parallelograms and the hexagons. She was miserable.

And then it happened, Her brother Raju, bought her a beautiful yellow, and orange instrument box. Crystal clear set square and protractor, silvershine streamlined compass.

Mina just fell in love with the box and the instruments. That night she dreamt of herself climbing the peak of a triangle, rolling inside a circle, balancing on a scale. What fun!

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## Now Mina Loves Geometry



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SCIENCE	100	80
MATHEMATICS	100	92
SOCIAL STUDIES	100	76
ARTS	100	74
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	100	90
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## GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

गुणेषु क्रियतां यत्नः किमादोषैः प्रयोजनम् ।

विक्रीयन्ते न घण्टाभिर्गावः क्षीरविवर्जिताः ॥

*Guṇeṣu kriyatām yatnaḥ kimāṭopaiḥ prayojanam*

*Vikriyante na ghaṇṭābhīrgāvaḥ kṣīravivarjītāḥ*

One ought to develop real qualities, mere show won't do. A cow that yields no milk won't be in demand even if she sports a string of bells around her neck.

*Subhasitaratnabhandagaram*



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## AN INCIDENT TO REMEMBER

Exactly 50 years ago an incident had shaken the whole country.

The country was then under a foreign rule. The struggle for independence was going on

The incident took place in the course of the struggle—and it is famous as the Chittagong Armoury Raid.

In our series, *They Fought for Freedom*, we had begun with freedom-fighters belonging to the last century. But we are interrupting the sequence. In this issue we recount the episode of the Armoury Raid, for, the country is celebrating its 50th Anniversary.

Can all those who fight violently for a cause be called revolutionary? No. First of all, the cause must be very great. (Very few causes are as great as the freedom of one's motherland.) Secondly, the strength of the enemy opposing the cause must have been superior in strength and he must have taken recourse to violence first. Thirdly, individual human beings cannot be the targets of genuine revolutionaries. It is the set-up which is their target. Last but not the least, in order to be called a true revolutionary, one must be absolutely clear in his conscience. He must have pure selfless love for his ideal, and no hatred or enmity towards any individual.



Dantes, not even twenty, was about to become the captain of a ship. It was because the old captain died suddenly on the ship's voyage from Naples to Marseilles, and Dantes was the most sincere and intelligent officer after him, according to the ship's owner.

But Dantes's good luck angered a fellow named Danglars who coveted the post. For another aspect of his good luck, Dantes had yet another enemy, Mondego. Dantes was to marry a charming girl, Mercedes. This had made Mondego awfully jealous of him, for Mondego himself was eager to marry her.

Danglars and Mondego conspired to remove the obstacle that was Dantes from their paths.

That was the time when Napoleon Bonaparte was living exiled in Elba. There were people who wanted him to become the monarch of France again. The late captain of the ship was one of them. On the eve of his death, he had handed over a letter to Dantes for Napoleon. Dantes, innocent of politics, had done his errand. He was carrying back



STORY OF WORLD'S FAMOUS BOOKS

## THE COUNT OF MONTE-CRISTO

a letter from Elba to one of Napoleon's supporters in Paris.

Danglars and Mondego betrayed Dantes to the police. The judge who tried Dantes happened to be the son of the very man for whom the letter was meant. He was afraid that his own career would be in danger if his father's alliance with Napoleon became known. He destroyed the letter and ordered Dantes to be thrown into a prison on an island.

Year after year Dantes rotted in the dungeon. One night he heard the sound of the prisoner in the next dungeon digging a hole in the wall. Soon a tunnel connected the two dungeons, its two ends hidden behind the beds of the two prisoners, who became friends.

The other prisoner, an old man, gave Dantes a scrap of paper which contained the clue



to the discovery of a secret treasure lying in a cave in the desert island of Monte-Cristo.

The old man died. The prison officials put his dead body in a sack. But before they could throw the sack in the sea, Dantes had dragged the dead body into his own dungeon and placed it on his own bed. Then he entered the sack himself.

Soon the officials came and carried off the sack and threw it into the sea. Dantes swam to safety.

He lost no time in reaching the island of Monte-Cristo. Following the clue, he dis-

covered the fabulous wealth. He grew immensely rich. Back in Paris, he introduced himself as the Count of Monte-Cristo and became a highly influential man. But he was determined to avenge the injustice done to him. Mondego had married Mercedes. Danglars had become a banker. The judge occupied a much higher rank.

Dantes struck each of them, ruining their peace and happiness.

*The Count of Monte-Cristo* was written by Alexandre Dumas (1802-1870), the prolific French writer.





# THREE PRINCESSES

8

*[The three brothers, in quest of the three lost princesses, arrived in a strange castle that belonged to a giant. One amazing experience following another, they all turned into swans once they were in the magic lake behind the castle.]*

## Joys and Tears

Udayan and the young lady who pushed Udayan and his brothers into the lake were under the impression that the giant had seen them. "But it was not so. The giant who had left Kumar and Nishith at the gate of his castle, had gone over to the forest.

"Where are you, dwarf wizard?"

The giant's shouts had brought the wizard out of his house. He was surprised at the sudden appearance of the giant. Soon he found out that those three young men who tricked him to surrender his magic powders and his towel to them had already reached the castle and met the giant.

"Now it is your turn to be tricked by those clever lads, giant, sir!" he warned. "Get back to your castle as soon as you can and turn those lads into stones. If they explore the castle and come to be in know

of all our secrets, we may even be in the danger of losing our lives!"

The giant changed into a vulture and took off for the castle. That was his method of moving about.

Back in the castle, he felt dismayed at finding the two young men missing from their posts. First he looked for them in the meadow outside the castle. Then he had advanced towards the lake, shouting, "What is all this?"

What he meant by these words was, he did not understand why those two youths should come to him at all and why should they hide.

He stood on the bank of the lake and commanded the swans to come closer. The swans had to obey him. He surveyed them with satisfaction and then went away again.

As the giant went out of the castle, Udayan and the young



lady swum ashore and got back their real forms.

"You must be travellers who lost their way! But I am surprised how you managed to come so far. There is a certain wizard who lives in the forest. Any traveller who tries to come towards this castle falls into his trap. It is difficult to say what might become of his victims and what is his relation with this giant. However, it will be wise for you to leave this cursed place at once," said the young lady.

Udayan was charmed at the honest advice given by her.

"I wish I could abide by your advice. But myself and

my brothers have come to this weird region with a mission. Besides, before I think of departing, I must get back my brothers in their living human forms!" said Udayan.

"The one who became a statue and the other who became a monkey are your brothers, are they? Well, we too are three sisters," mused the girl.

"Will you please tell me who you are and how you came here?" asked Udayan, unable to suppress his curiosity any longer.

The young lady looked into the lake. Two of the swans were swimming a yard or two







away, as if waiting for some message from the young lady. She stooped and picked them up and placed them on the shore. To Udayan's great amazement, they too turned into young ladies!

"You look like triplets!" exclaimed Udayan.

"We are!" admitted the first young lady.

"I wish you were the daughters of King Sudharma—the lost princesses we are looking for!" murmured Udayan.

The three young ladies looked at one another, their faces lighted up with joy and surprise.

"O noble young man, we are indeed the daughters of King Sudharma. My name is Subhashini, and....." the young lady stopped without giving out the names of her sisters.

"And the other two are Suhasini and Sukeshini! We ought to know your names if we are really looking for you! Have I passed the test?" Udayan smiled.

Subhashini blushed. Then tears drizzled in her eyes. "We had given up the hope of ever meeting anybody who would know us by our names," Subhashini said.

"But," Udayan suddenly looked surprised. "The lost princesses were very young girls, not young ladies....." he stammered out.

The three sisters smiled while weeping. "Noble young man, have you not looked at yourself? Don't you feel that some change could have come over you too? The moment a human being enters a giant's den for the first time, he grows by ten years," said Subhashini. "But for the next ten years he remains just like that," she added.

"How strange!" said Udayan, looking at his own stature. For the first time he grew cons-



cious of the change that had come over him.

"The same must have happened to your brothers too. Now, we must restore them to their humanity," said Subhasini.

"O God! Do you know how to do that?" Udayan asked with joy.

The three princesses led Udayan to a giant statue. Out of the giant's mouth came a constant flow of water. Subhasini plucked a few leaves from a certain plant that looked queer. She made the leaves into a cup and filled up the cup with water from the giant statue's mouth.

Standing on the bank, Udayan called out his brothers' names. Two swans came swimming towards them. Udayan brought them upon the land. At once one of them changed into the statue that it had been, and the other into the monkey.

Subhasini fed the monkey with the leaf-cup along with the water in it. The monkey became Nishith!

Then the three sisters and the two brothers brought palmfuls of water from the giant statue's mouth and bathed Kumar's statue with it. The



stone became Kumar!

When Kumar and Nishith realised that they stood before the very girls for whom they had risked so much, they felt like dancing with delight.

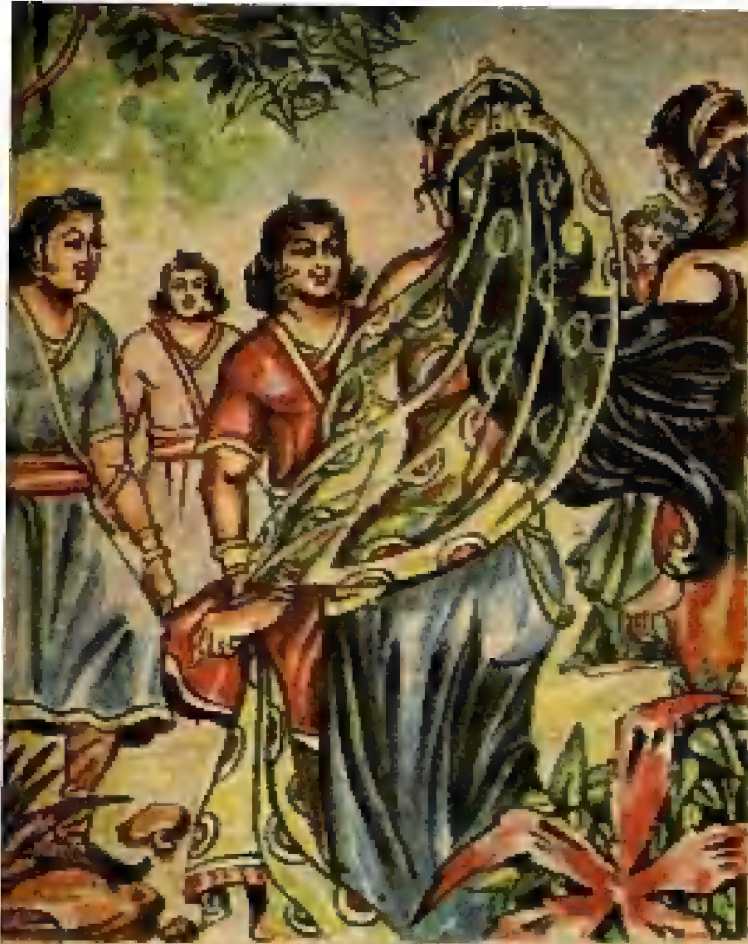
"Our mission is fulfilled!" exclaimed Kumar.

"The first half of it, you can say," Udayan reminded his brothers. "It can be fulfilled only when we have restored the princesses to their parents."

"True," agreed Nishith and Kumar.

"Rescuing us from the giant's clutch cannot be easy. I request you once more to consider your own safety first. We won't





like you to endanger your lives on account of us," said Subhasini.

The three brothers laughed.

"Once we have met you, to go back without you is out of the question. We don't care whether we live or die. We must do everything possible to take you out of this enchanted castle," said Udayan in a firm tone.

The girls wiped their eyes.

Udayan pretended not to see their tears. "I am sure," he said, "Providence has made us meet. I feel equally sure, Providence will crown our mission with success."

"I wonder what is your fault for which the giant decided to kidnap and detain you!" It was Nishith who asked.

"Our fault was that we were triplets!" replied Subhasini.

"I don't understand," said Nishith.

Explained Subhasini, "For years now, the giant is looking for twins or triplets. He must have fifty of them in order to please his demoniac deity."

"What will the deity do with them?" asked Kumar.

"They are to be sacrificed to the deity—I mean killed at the deity's altar," answered Suke-shini!

"And that will earn for the giant the deity's goodwill. The deity has already given him this magic castle. The creature might receive the boon of immortality if he can sacrifice fifty twins or triplets. So far he has been able to gather fortyseven" informed Subhasini.

"Is it so? Thank God, he did not know that we were triplets!" exclaimed Udayan. "He would have completed his fifty with us!"

"Are you triplets?" asked the sisters in a chorus, quite amused.

"We are," confirmed Uda-



yan. "Now, tell us if you know anything more about the giant."

"The giant has an underground castle. I feel that more of his secrets can be known if you can manage to enter that castle," said Subhasini.

"We can do that easily. We have at our disposal the means for making ourselves invisible—the magic powder!" said Nishith.

"It is good you told me about it at this point. For your information, those magic powders would not be effective in that underground castle. So, think of some other means," warned Subhasini.

Just then a whirlwind, with a shrill sound, seemed to break upon the lake.

"It is the giant. He is re-

turning after his day's quest of twins," said the girls. They prepared to jump into the lake.

"Should we jump too?" asked the brothers.

"No. Even if you become swans, you will not be safe. At the day's end the giant counts the swans. Better grow invisible," advised the princesses.

Udayan, with the help of the powder, made himself and his brothers invisible. The girls jumped into the lake and changed into swans.

The whirlwind subsided. A vulture descended near the lake. As the invisible trio looked on, the vulture changed into the giant that it was. He flexed his muscles and gave out a fearful cry which echoed in the castle. *(To continue)*





## ADVENTURES OF MINTOO A CROWN FROM THE BLUE!

The death of the king was most sudden. He had no heir. The council of ministers and noblemen decided to choose a new king.



It was the tradition to let an elephant wander carrying holy water in a golden pot. He on whose head the elephant emptied the pot was chosen the king. The priests selected the baby elephant for the mission.



The baby elephant, bedecked with ornaments, was made to carry the golden pot. It was followed by a procession of musicians, ministers, priests and noblemen.



The baby elephant headed towards the forest. Mintoo, sad at losing the baby elephant, had fallen asleep in a cave, with Meena at his side. Jhandoo woke him up.







The baby elephant straight walked towards Mintoo and Meena who had come out of the cave, and poured the holy water on Mintoo's head. The people burst into cheers.

The ministers and the priests requested Mintoo to ride the elephant. But Mintoo was reluctant. He went to the grave of the hermit and prayed alone.



Mintoo then accepted the offer and rode the elephant. Behind him sat Meena and behind her Jhandoo. Meena's parents, riding Mintoo's horse, joined the procession that returned to the palace.



Mintoo and Meena first got married. Then took place the grand coronation. Mintoo and Meena, as king and queen, lived happily and gloriously ever thereafter.



(The Series, *Adventures of Mintoo*, is concluded)



## A COMMENT MADE ALOUD

The old minister was like a teacher to the young prince. One day, while enjoying a walk, the prince said, "Why do father and you discuss almost every issue—small or big—in private?"

"Why in private? Well, I shall try to answer your question in a few days," said the minister.

Two days later, while out for a walk again, the minister informed the prince that two spies of the neighbouring kingdom had been arrested. He spoke in a voice that was loud enough for their bodyguards to hear.

The same day, by noon, there was a strong rumour in the town that two spies of the neighbouring kingdom had been hanged. By evening the rumour was that the neighbouring kingdom, in order to avenge the execution of its spies, was sending its army towards the town.

Next day, in the morning, it was heard that a battle was going on in the frontier! Officers neglected their duty, traders enhanced the price of their goods. There was panic everywhere. In the afternoon a royal announcement assured the people that there was no war!

"Did you see the effect of a simple comment spoken aloud?" the minister asked the prince.





## True Wealth of the World

"O mighty ruler, this young man killed our father and was trying to escape. But we gave him a hot chase and caught him. Let him be punished according to law," complained two brothers to the Caliph. They had brought with them the accused, another young man, his hands bound.

"What have you to say to this?" the Caliph asked the accused.

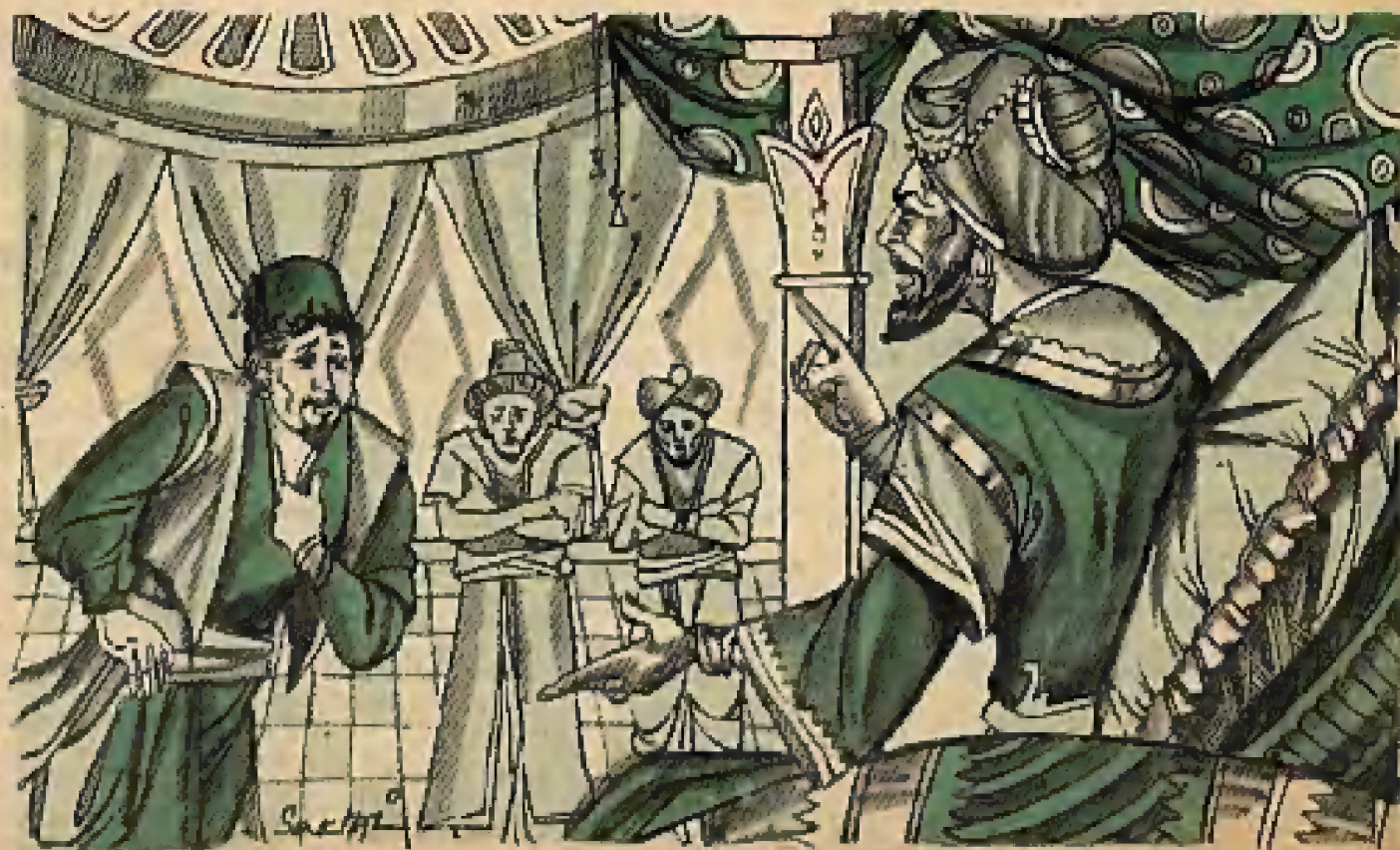
"My lord, they are not lying, yet I should say that the old

man was killed by his own weapon—and by the same force with which he had used it," said the youth.

"What do you mean to say?" demanded the Caliph.

The young man gave an account of the incident:

The young man was a merchant. With his camels he was proceeding to the town. While passing through a village, one of his camels broke away from the caravan and entered a garden. The young man ran after the







camel, but before he could bring it back to the road, the owner of the garden, with great fury, hurled a stone at the camel. It struck the animal on its forehead. It fell dead.

This infuriated the young man. He picked up that very stone and hurled it back at the owner of the garden, an old man, with equal fury. It struck the old man dead!

"My noble ruler, it is the old man's fury that stimulated fury in me. It is his impulsive action that made me act that madly," concluded the accused.

The Caliph heard him with patience. Then he said, "Young

man, the way you acted in the heat of the moment was not unnatural, though it would have been wise of you not to act like that. But, by trying to escape, you have worsened your case. With your life you must pay for your crime."

The young man heard the judgement with calmness. Then, bowing down to the Caliph, he said, "O Commander of the Faithful, I have nothing to say upon your decision. But I plead for three days' time. A certain man, while dying, left his infant son under my charge. Also, he confided to me where his wealth lies buried. If I die today, the wealth will remain unused forever. I may be allowed to go home and entrust the child and the wealth to somebody."

"Who will stand surety for you?" asked the Caliph.

The accused looked at the courtiers. There was nobody among them whom he knew. However, when his eyes fell on a nobleman called Abu Zarr, a hope flashed on his face.

"Sir, I do not know you. Still I feel that I can ask you a favour. Will you care to stand surety for me?" the young man asked Abu Zarr.



The other courtiers laughed. To stand surety for a man condemned to death was taking a great risk. If the condemned man failed to turn up, one who stood surety for him would die. Why should Abu Zarr take the risk for a stranger?

But, to everybody's surprise, Abu Zarr stepped forward. He declared his readiness to oblige the accused.

The young man thanked him and left the court.

Three days passed. The two brothers—the accusers—came to the court again. The accused was not to be seen. The Caliph himself felt worried. Abu Zarr was well-known for his wisdom and goodness. The Caliph would not like to lose him. But he ought not to set a bad example by sparing him his life when the law demanded it.

"My friend, yours was a foolish action. You should not have heeded the unknown young man's request," commented the Caliph. All the members of the court agreed with him.

"My master, please do not hesitate to take my life now that the time granted to the accused has run out," said Abu Zarr.

With a sigh of distress, the



Caliph asked his officers to arrange for the execution of Abu Zarr.

Many courtiers broke down. Only one thing could save the nobleman—if the accusers pardoned the accused. Several courtiers pleaded with the two brothers to do so. But the brothers were not willing to go without satisfying their vengeance.

Just when Abu Zarr would be led away to be put to death, the accused arrived. He was sweating and gasping for breath.

The court fell silent. Then many people praised the young man for his courage and honesty



in turning up to die!

The young man thanked them and said politely, "I had to come so that nobody should say that faith has disappeared from the world! If praise you must, praise this nobleman who stood surety for me. He could have very well refused to do so."

"How could have I refused, young man? When, from so many people present here, you chose to vest your faith in me, I had to honour it. Nobody should say that sympathy had disappeared from the world!" said Abu Zarr.

Suddenly the two brothers, the accusers, said, addressing the Caliph, "O our kind ruler,

we beg to inform you that we have forgiven, this young man. It will be inhuman on our part to dishonour such noble sentiments by insisting that the accused be punished. Let nobody say that humanity had disappeared from the world."

The Caliph was deeply moved. So were all. It was a great day in his court. He set the accused free and threw a grand feast in honour of the accused, the accusers, and the nobleman.

"The qualities you have shown, gentlemen, are the qualities which are the true wealth of the world," the Caliph declared.





## THE CALL OF THE HIMALAYAS

It was night. Ravi whispered to Raman, "Do you know? My uncle and auntie are proposing a trip to the Himalayas. I overheard them. They say that they will love to take me with them. What about you? You too have holidays as I have. Why not join us?"

The very term, the Himalayas, conjured up in Raman's mind the picture of snow-clad mountains, pearly streams dancing down the hills and clouds coiling round lofty peaks. The Himalayas, indeed, had been Raman's dream. How

could he believe that the offer of a trip into that charming world would come to him so unexpectedly?

"But, will your uncle..."

"Raman!" trilled out Ravi, "You do not know how loving and noble my uncle and auntie are!"

Things moved fast. Dr. Murty, who was a bit uncertain about letting his son accompany Mr. Singh's family, soon yielded to the pleading of the two boys as well as that of Mr. and Mrs. Singh, Ravi's uncle and aunt.





Raman, of course, returned with his father to Delhi. Two days later he was picked up by Ravi and the party.

They left Delhi, by a bus, at 7 in the morning. Through Meerut, Muzzafarnagar and Roorkee, the bus rolled forward, with a few halts.

The spell of the Himalayās could be felt right from Roorkee. The road ran along the beautiful Ganga canal. Every moment the hills and the forests ahead were growing closer and more inviting to the pilgrims.

By 12 noon they were at Hardwar, 263 kilometres away from Delhi.

"Hail to Mother Ganga!" rose the jolly shouts from a group of mendicants heading for a dip in the holy river.

"How magnificent is the flow!" observed Ravi.

"The Ganga seems to be born here!" commented Raman.

"My dear boys, the Ganga has coursed for over eight hundred kilometres through the Himalayas before reaching Hardwar," informed Mr. Singh.

The bus stopped at a place that was not far from the greatest attraction of the town—*Hari-ki-Pauri*. It is a bathing ghat with the mark of Lord





Vishnu's feet.

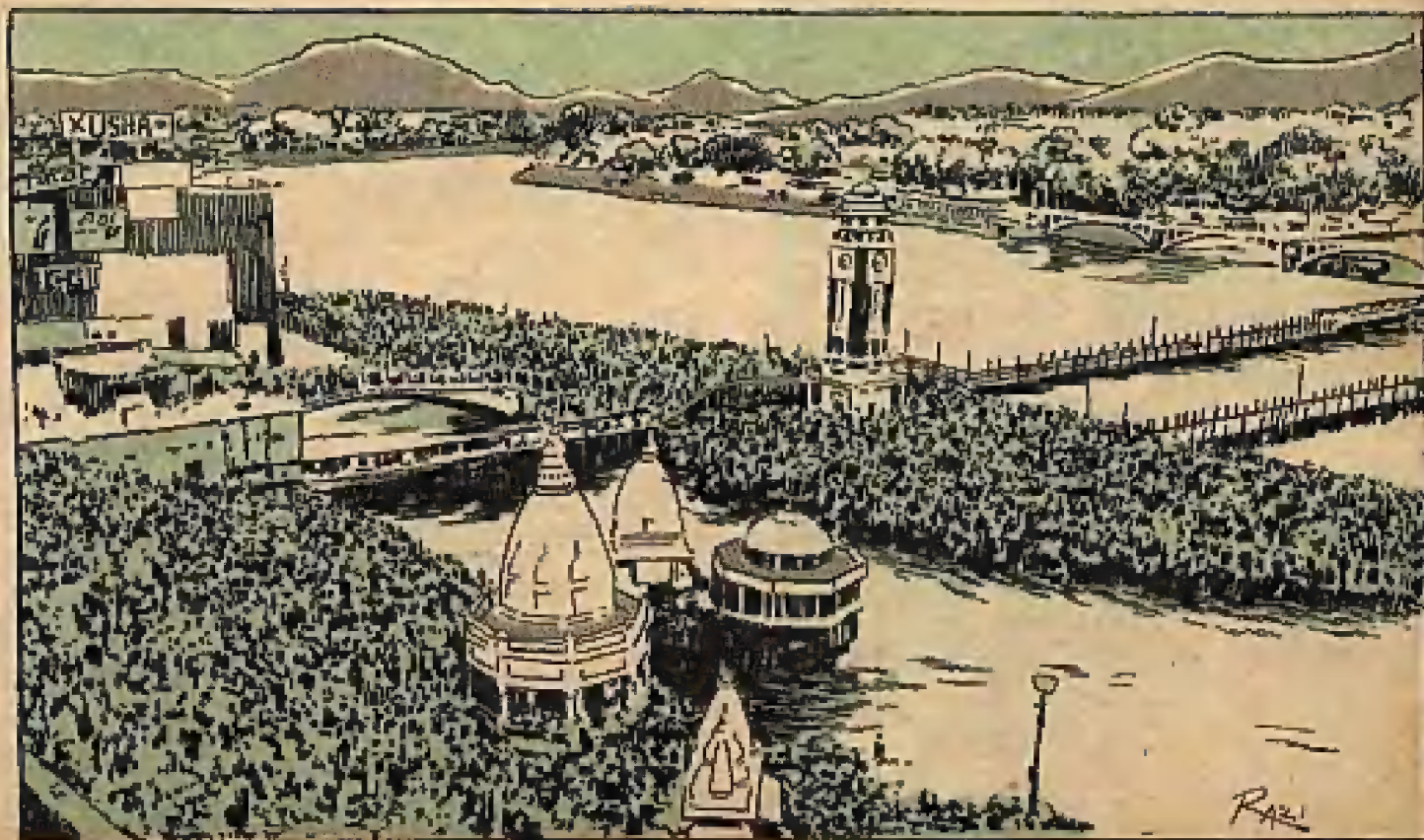
Devotees believed that a dip in *Hari-ki-Pauri* brought great religious benefit. Near it stood the temple of Gangadwara.

"In no other country is to be found so many towns, as in India, which date back to thousands of years. Hardwar is one of them. In ancient times it was known as Kapilasthan—after Sage Kapila who lived here. Nearby is Kushavarta, the seat of Sage Dattatreya. When the Ganga came flowing down, the sage's stick and jug were swept away. He was so angry that he would have stopped the flow by a curse. But

Brahma intervened and pacified the sage. The sage allowed the river to flow on towards the plain," said a wandering Sadhu who had become friendly with Mr. Singh.

Ravi and Raman, lowering their voices, were discussing the possibility of having a swim in the river. Mr. Singh could overhear them.

"You can have a brief dip here, nothing more than that. Let Mother Ganga see you. Tomorrow you can swim at Rishikesh. By then you would have become accustomed to the climate of this region," said Mr. Singh.







*New Tales of King Vikram  
and the Vampire*

## A CRIMINAL'S TRIAL

Dark was the night and fearful the atmosphere. Thunder roared and flashes of lightning revealed weird faces. The howl of jackals was mixed up with the eerie laughter of ghosts.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree and brought the corpse down. Then, as soon as he began crossing the deserted cremation ground, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke out, "O King, I do not know about the methods you follow in trying the criminals. Let me narrate to you the case of a trial that appears unusual to me. Pay attention to my narration. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: Long ago, a certain city experienced a strange thief. He specialised in snatching away bags and bundles from people's hands. His operation was so swift that nobody could catch him. In



fact, nobody could even see his face. The guards of the city got totally demoralised at their failure to catch the criminal.

One evening an elderly gentleman was leisurely walking along a road, holding a bag. The thief appeared from nowhere and snatched the bag and ran away.

The gentleman raised no cry. Quietly he walked and reached a small hut at the farthest corner of the bazar. He sat down on the veranda and waited. Two hours later a stranger came there and asked him if a certain woman lived in that hut. The old man stood up and instantly took hold of the stranger. A number of guards who were lying in ambush too came rushing to his aid. The thief was captured.

It was surprising that the thief did not look like a bad character. When caught, he stood calm.

The old man 'shed his disguise. He was the chief magistrate of the city. Needless to say, he was loitering deliberately sporting the bag. The bag contained, apart from some money, a letter. It appeared to have been written by a woman to a relative telling him that her only



child was dying. A certain amount of money was urgently needed to save him.

The thief realised that his action in stealing the bag might cost the child's life. Following the address given in the letter, he had come to hand over the bag to the woman.

The magistrate made the announcement that the mysterious thief had been caught. He also set the date for his trial—which was the very next day. All were free to witness the trial.

The magistrate was advised by many respectable men of the city to pass a death



sentence on the criminal. A large crowd gathered outside the courtroom.

But the magistrate made the thief take an oath declaring that he would give up stealing and lead an honest life. Then he freed the fellow.

The man thanked the magistrate and greeted the crowd with folded hands and quietly left the court.

The vampire paused for a moment and then challenged the king: "O King, if the thief was to be set free, why was the magistrate trying so hard to capture him? Why at all did he conduct an open trial if the fellow was to go unpunished? Doesn't such conduct show that the magistrate was an whimsical man? Answer me if you can. If you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answers,

your head would roll off your shoulders."

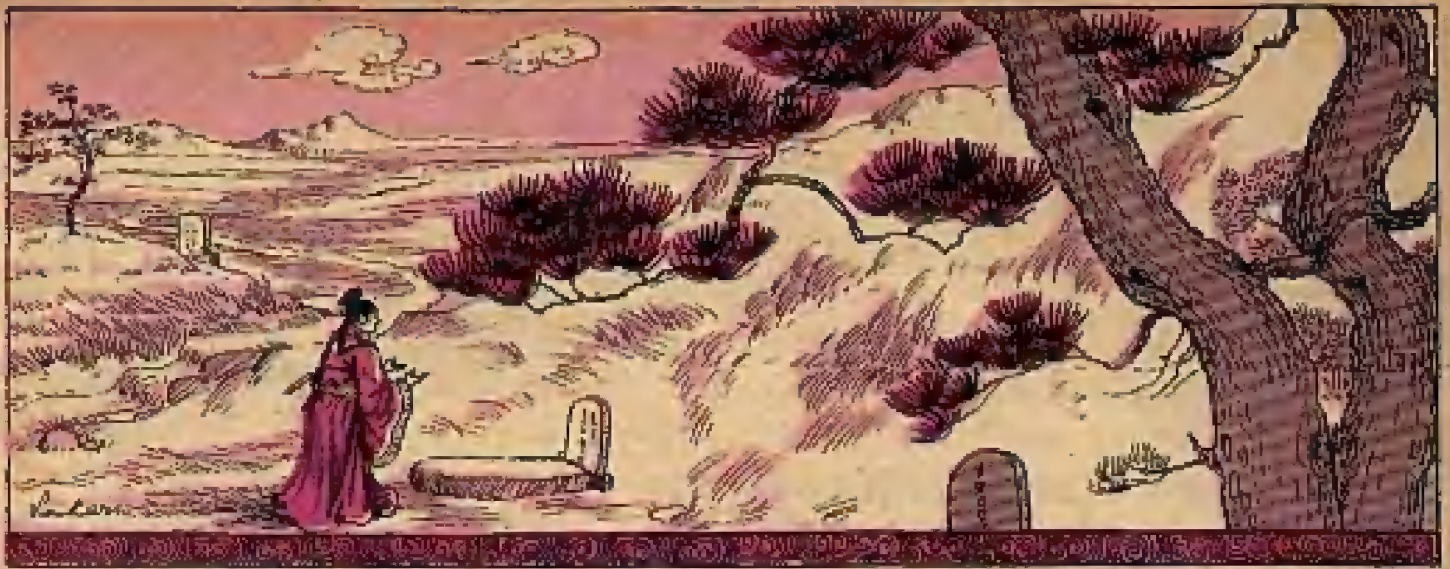
Answered King Vikram forthwith: "Far from being whimsical, the magistrate was a man of wisdom and conscience. He guessed that it was a misplaced enthusiasm for adventure that had made a thief of the man. But the man was noble-hearted. Otherwise he would not have come to hand over the money to the imaginary woman. For this gesture of nobleness, he deserved to go unpunished.

"The magistrate tried him before a crowd so that all will know him by his face. Once the people had become familiar with his person, he would not dare take to stealing again."

No sooner had the king finished replying than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.







## THE COMPASSIONATE TRAVELLER

Centuries ago there was a poor scholar named San in China. Once he heard that the emperor had decided to appoint some teachers in the royal academy. Those who wished to be candidates were to reach the capital on a certain day.

San had devoted years to studies and he was confident that he will be selected for the academy. He started his journey towards the capital.

It was a long way. Passing through a deserted meadow he saw a young man lying under a tree.

At a glance San understood that the young man was sick. When San went closer to him,

he faltered out a few words, praying for drinking water.

San climbed a mount and saw a pool at some distance. He ran there and fetched water.

The young man drank the water and looked at San gratefully. But soon he breathed his last.

San was in a dilemma. It was getting dark. Unless he kept going, he would not be able to reach his destination on time. But how can he leave the dead there to be eaten up by animals?

While his ambition goaded him ahead, his conscience pulled him towards the tree.

"How unfortunate it is that



I do not know his name and address," murmured San. He opened the dead man's bag. It contained a good amount of money, but there was nothing to say who he was.

San hid the bag in a hole and ran to the nearest village. He bought a coffin and returned to the spot. He placed the dead-body in the coffin, dug a grave and buried it along with the bag.

Then he prayed near the grave. It was already midnight. He started walking again.

On reaching his destination he learnt that he had been late for the interview.

Disappointed, he began his journey back home. In the meadow he saw a horse following him. He tried to evade the animal, but it would not leave him. He rode it and let

it go as it liked.

By evening the horse reached a decent mansion. When the servants of the house saw him, they looked puzzled. One of them ran into the house and returned with an old man.

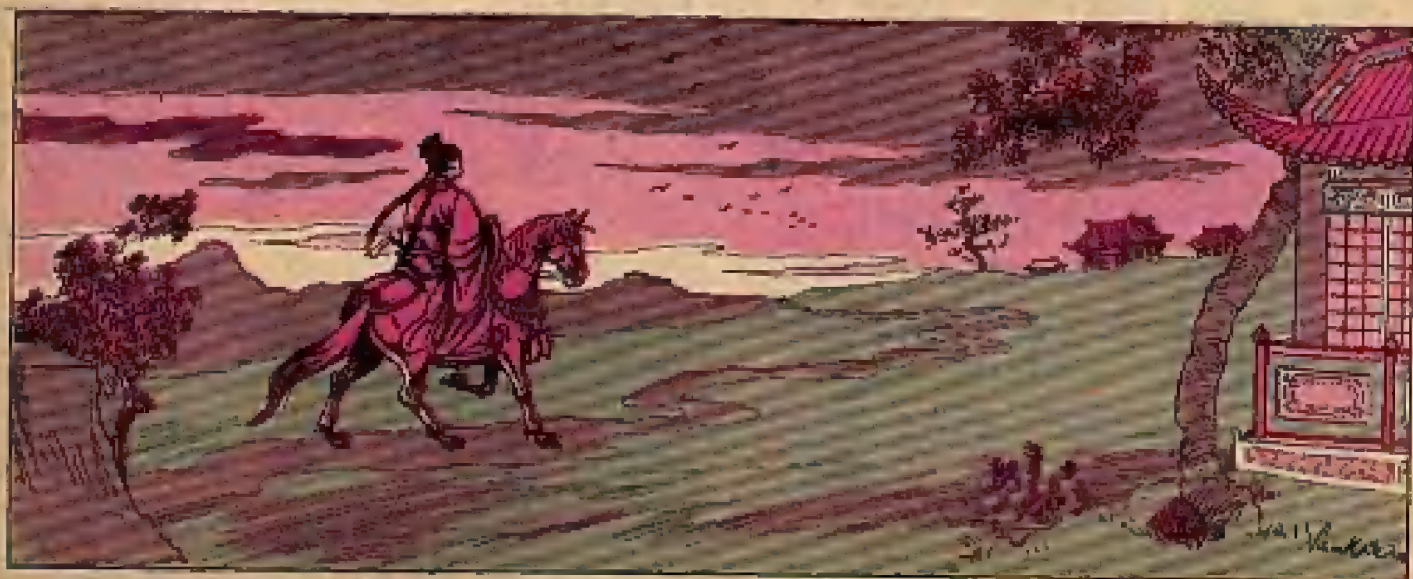
"How did you get my son's horse? Where is he?" asked the old man.

San told him all that had befallen him on his way to the city and while returning.

The old man broke into tears. "The dead youth must be my son," he said.

They went to the meadow and dug the grave. When the old man saw that San had been so honest that he had not taken a single coin from his son's bag, he was moved.

He adopted San as his son. San became famous as a scholar.







## LEGENDS AND PARABLES OF INDIA

# THE FLATTERED KING

Long long ago there was a king who never paid any attention to the problems of his subjects. He spent all his time in the company of some selfish friends. These friends kept the king pleased with flattering words. The king's officers turned into a gang of tyrants. They went from village to village like a pack of wolves and harassed the subjects.

The king had a well-wisher in his priest. The priest was extremely worried. He never got a chance to direct the king's attention towards the suffering of the people:

One day the priest overheard the loafers telling the king, "All

your subjects, day and night, are singing your praise!" Then, one by one they cited words which they said they had heard from the people. They were flattering words, but needless to say, they were lies.

As soon as the king was separated from his friends, the priest told him, "My lord, your friends have not been able to say all that the people are saying. If you wish to hear them, you must make a journey across the kingdom at least once."

The king who had been pleased to hear the lies of his friends hoped to hear even more flattering words directly from the subjects. He and the priest





went out in disguise.

Before long, passing through a village, they saw an old man, seated before his hut, writhing in pain.

"What has happened to you?" asked the travellers.

"A nail has entered my toe, cursed be the king!" cried out the old man.

"Why curse the king for a nail in your toe?" asked the priest.

"Under the good-for-nothing king, his officers have become tyrants. They plunder our houses. Yesterday they were seen coming towards our village. We fled into the forest.

I had placed some nails before my hut to prevent them from entering it. Now, I am a victim of my own nail. Had we a good king, this would not have happened," explained the man.

The priest smiled looking at the disappointed king. The two travellers then entered a small forest. They heard a cry and soon found out an old woman lying on the ground. She had fallen down while climbing a tree for wood.

"Damned be the king!" she muttered.

"Must you curse the king for your fall? Is it right for you to climb a tree at your age?" demanded the priest.

"I have two young daughters. I can neither let them come out for fear of the king's beastly officers, nor can I marry them off!"

"You don't expect the king to find matches for your daughters, do you?" asked the priest.

"No, but who will come forward to marry them at a time when the homes are not safe?" asked the old woman in reply.

Beyond the forest were paddy fields. The two travellers, passing through it, saw a farmer wailing by the side of his woun-



ded bullock.

"How was your bullock wounded?" asked the priest.

"Struck by my plough. I wish the king had been wounded instead of my bullock!"

"How is the king responsible for the accident?" asked the priest.

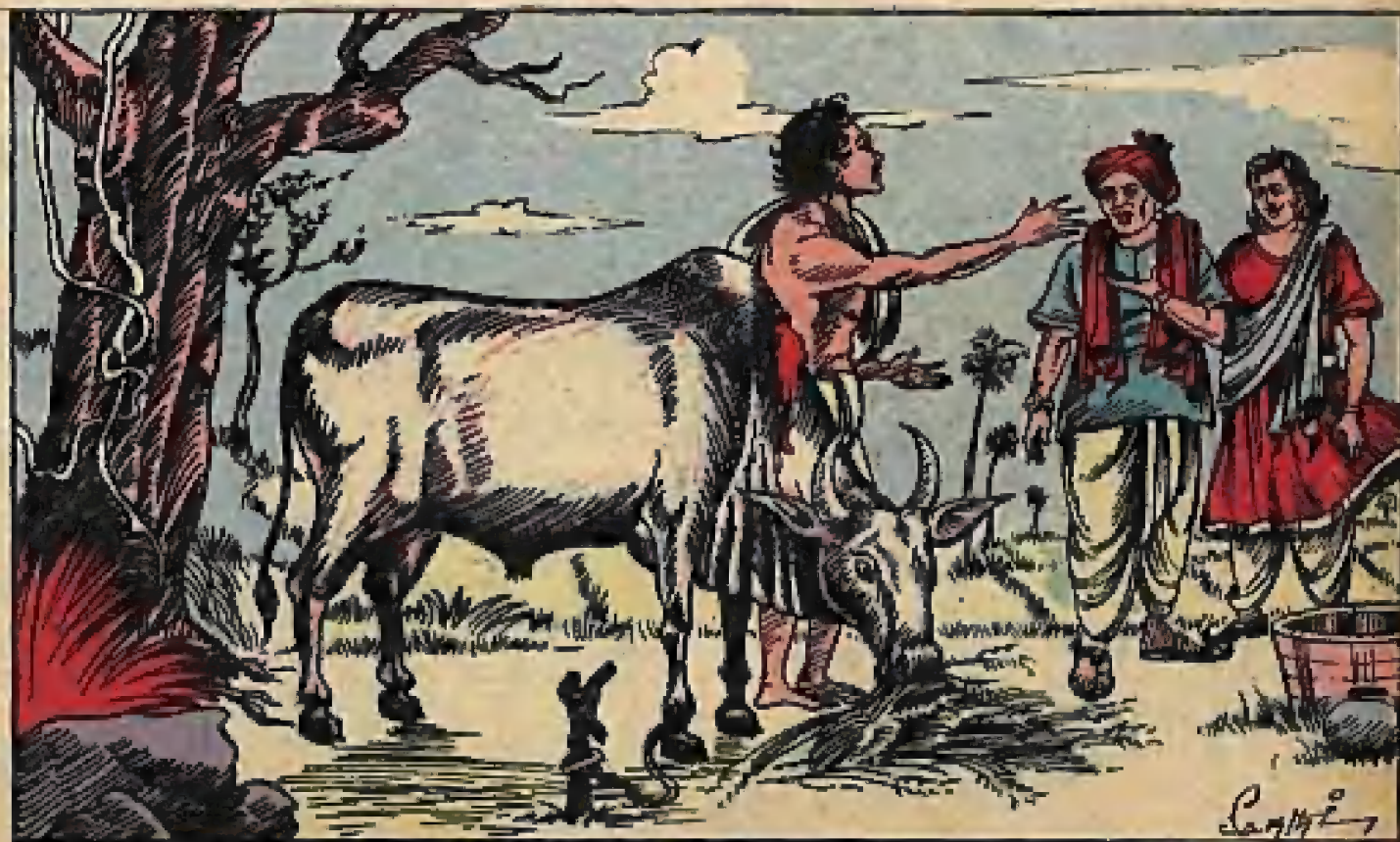
"My wife had just finished cooking when a gang of officers trespassed into our house and ate up everything! My wife promised to arrange for some food for me. I had grown awfully hungry. I was looking back towards the road again and again. My plough slipped and wounded the bullock.

Who is to be held responsible for the mischief of the officers if not the king?"

As the king and his priest went farther, they saw a cow lowing pathetically at the death of her calf. The king's tax-collectors had killed her calf in order to use its skin for making sheaths for their swords.

"Let the king feel the pain of losing a child to hooligans as this poor cow feels!" several villagers said with anguish.

"Let us get out of such places!" screamed out the king with anguish. "Let us take a short-cut to the palace through the fields."





They avoided villages. But while walking through a pasture, they saw a crow swooping down upon a dry pond and carrying away a frog.

"Let the king be eaten up by jackals and vultures!" croaked out an old frog of the pond.

"Why do you curse the king, O frog? Do you believe that the king could protect all the creatures in his kingdom, even the frogs?" asked the minister.

"Shut up!" shouted the frog. "Are you not ashamed of arguing in favour of a stupid king wasting his time with greedy flatterers and letting his wicked officers play havoc with his subjects? In normal times the crows would get enough to eat from the villagers. They

will not go famished and look for frogs at such remote places!"

The king's humiliation was complete. He shed bitter tears. But the priest consoled him, saying, "My lord, what you have heard and what you have seen should be a great lesson to you. It is never late to change. You are young and you have a long way to go. If you keep off bad company, punish the wicked officers, dismiss the lazy ones and encourage the good officers, the situation will change."

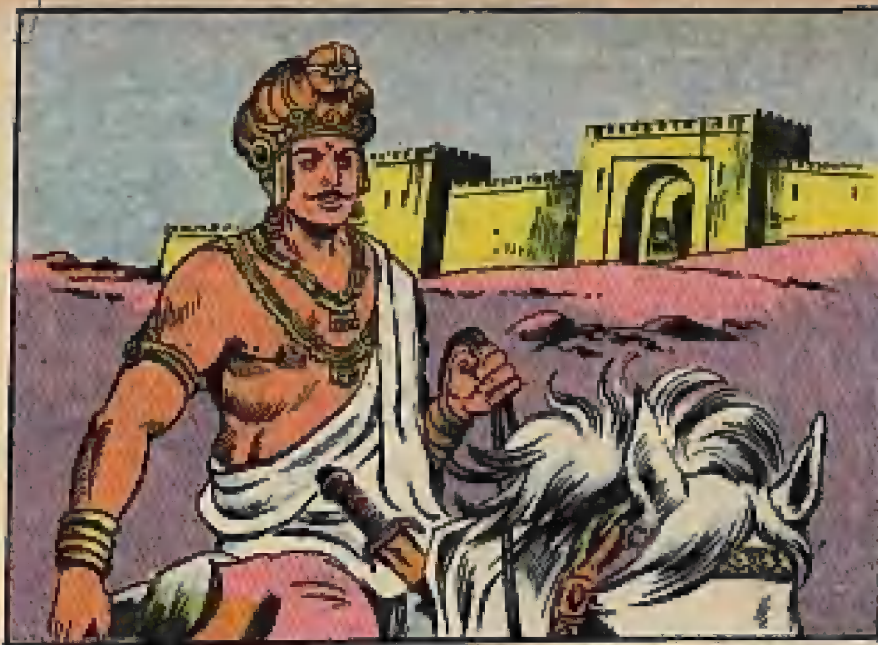
The king followed the priest's advice. Years later, when he travelled through the land again, he heard his subjects blessing him.

*From the Buddha Jatakas*





## THE TRUE CONQUEST



Asoka, whose full name was Asokavardhana, is perhaps the most famous king in the known history of India. A grandson of Chandragupta Maurya, he was the son of King Bindusara. It is because of him that Buddhism became a widely accepted religion.

King Bindusara had a number of queens and a number of sons. Once the princes were asked to assemble in a courtyard to meet a sage. They came and took their seats. When the young Asoka came, there was no seat vacant.



Asoka sat down on the bare ground. The sage and the king arrived there soon. Asked why he chose the ground for his seat instead of asking for a chair, Asoka replied, "Mother Earth is the most reliable seat. It never fails us!"



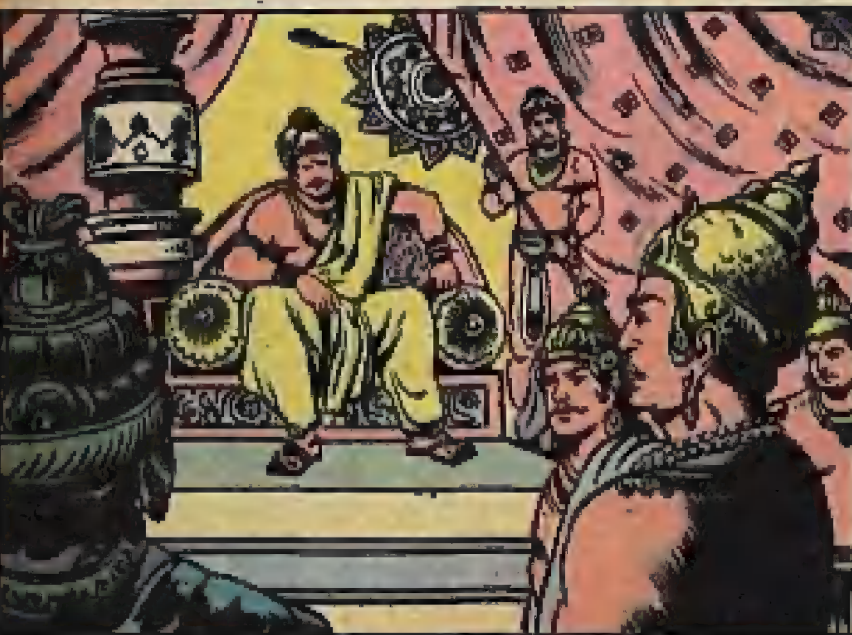


The sage confided to King Bindusara that Asoka had in him certain extraordinary traits. He would shine over others. When Asoka grew up to be a young man, Bindusara sent him to Ujjain, as the governor of Malwa.

King Bindusara died in 273 B.C. As soon as the news reached Asoka, he rushed to Pataliputra. The late king had not said who would succeed him. There was an air of indecision.

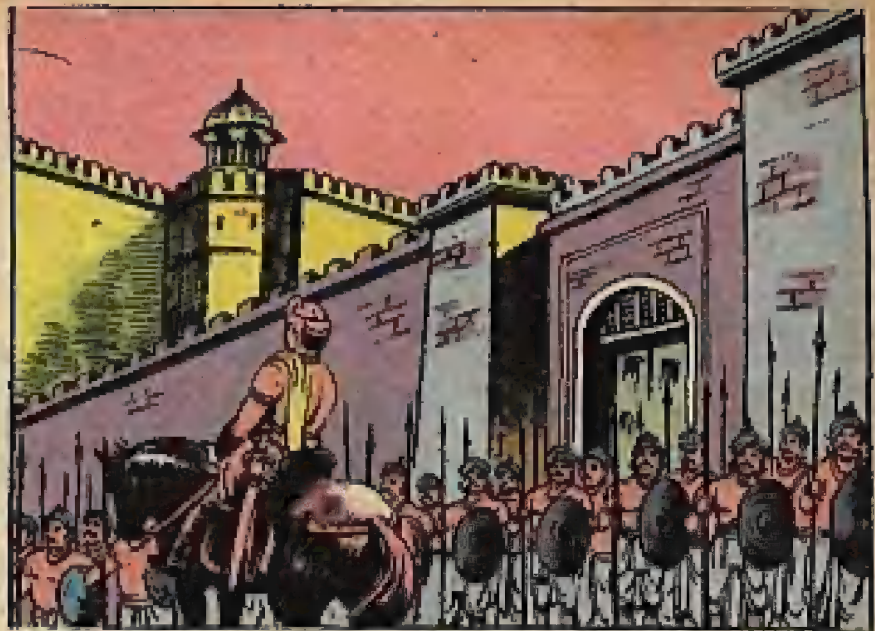


Asoka's arrival in the capital put an end to the indecisive situation. He had already proved his ability as a ruler. Besides, he was brave and, perhaps, ruthless. Nobody dared to oppose him; he occupied the throne.





The ambitious Asoka, called by others as *Chandasoka* or Asoka the Terrible, decided to build a vast empire for himself. He devoted himself to organising a large army and choosing able generals.

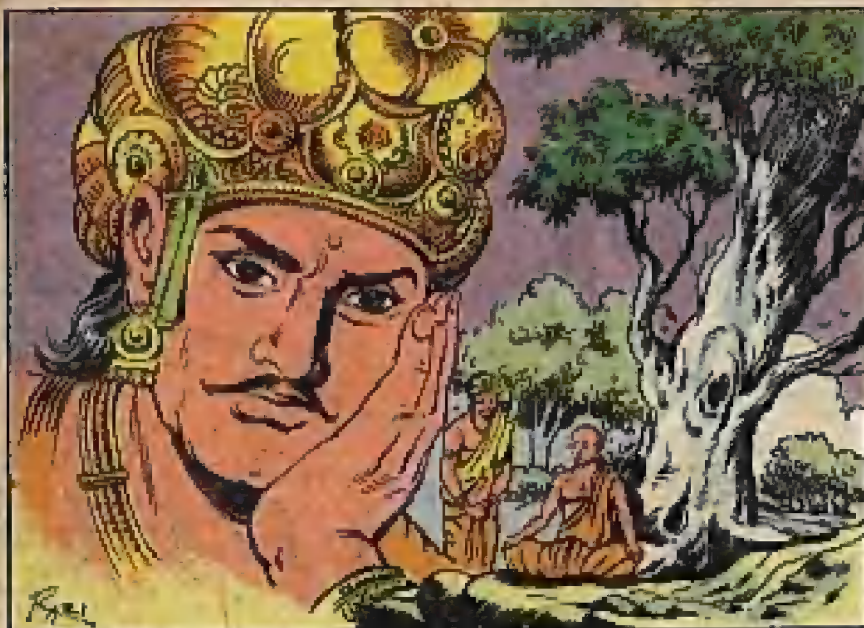


After annexing a few small territories, Asoka led an expedition to conquer the prosperous Kalinga empire. A bloody battle ensued. It went on for days. As the Kalinga soldiers would not surrender, Asoka's army carried on a brutal massacre.

From the top of a hill Asoka witnessed the battle in which one lakh people were killed and twice that number were taken captive. Victory, at last was his, but, far from rejoicing at it, he was beset with a deep remorse.

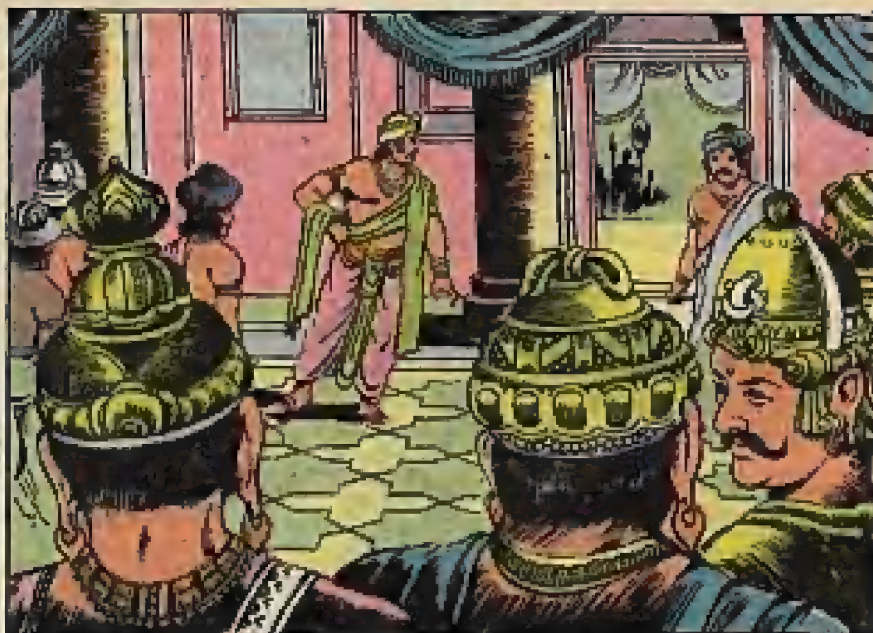






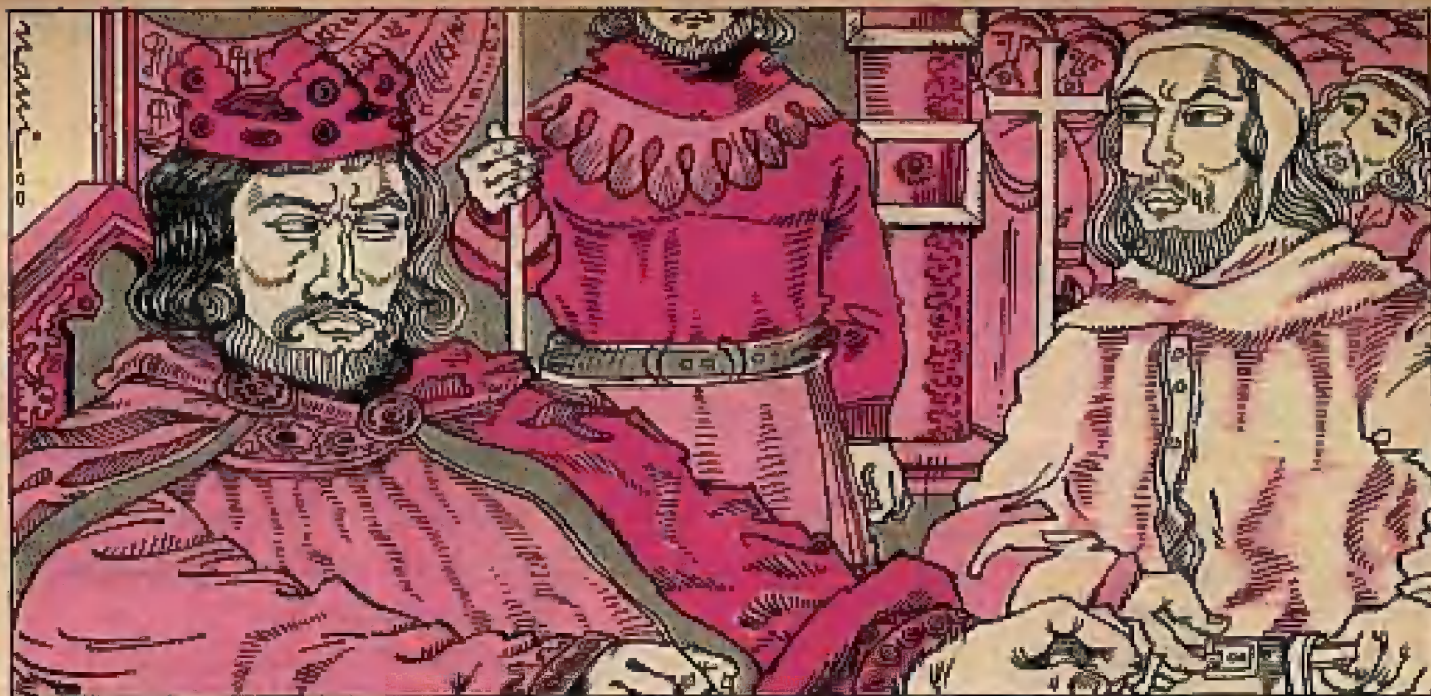
He returned to his capital a sad man. The memory of the cruel war haunted him. He found peace only upon meeting a Buddhist monk who taught him, it is not by sword, but by love that true conquest can be possible.

Asoka soon called a conference of his ministers, generals and his subordinate rulers and declared that he had eschewed violence forever and had become a champion of peace. He requested all to spread the message of light and love. He was called Dharmasoka. —Asoka the pious.



He was able to change the social climate of the whole country. Through rock edicts he expounded the principles of dharma. His son and daughter sailed to Sri Lanka carrying the message of Buddhism. *Dharma-Mahamatras*, religious teachers, helped people to be on the path of truth.





## The King And The Scavenger

Long long ago there lived a king whom everyone feared but no one loved. It was because he was cruel to all.

In his country lived a priest who preached peace and piety. His radiant face and his noble conduct attracted many. They thronged to see him and hear him, both in the morning and in the evening.

The news of the priest's popularity reached the king. He grew jealous. He ordered his guards to bring the priest to the court. The priest came and with him many of his followers. Their very sight infuriated the king. He shouted, "You wicked fellow! What makes you gather

crowds around you? And what is this mass-prayer for? I suspect treason."

"My Lord! I am innocent and ignorant of any treason. I preach nothing but peace and piety to the folk. And I am not that wicked to plot against my sovereign lord," replied the priest.

The king, far from being satisfied, said, "You liar! You can't cheat me as you cheat those foolish folk. I accuse you of treason. However, here are three questions. You will be spared if you answer them correctly. If you fail to answer even one, your head will go!"

"My lord! You are prejudiced against me. I know that you





will no longer listen to what I say. Come on with your questions. Let whatever God wills befall me."

The jealous king poured out the questions: "First, tell me my worth! Secondly, tell how many days it would take me to travel round the world. Finally let me hear from you what I am thinking!"

The priest's face paled. He scratched his head, tapped his forehead, and moistened his lip with his tongue. But he could not hit upon any answer to the questions. He bowed to the king and said, "My Lord! these are difficult riddles for me. If

you would be pleased to allow me three weeks, I may be able to find out the answers."

The king roared with laughter and said, "Poor priest! You would like to be alive for three more weeks! All right! I will treat this request as your last wish. Come back after three weeks. Your answers will decide your fate, although I can imagine what it will be!"

The priest consulted all the scholars he knew and his friends and his disciples. All of them listened to his plight and were full of sympathy for him, but when asked for a solution, they pleaded helplessness.

It was the fag end of the third week. The sad priest sat brooding in his garden. His scavenger who came to clean his garden inquired what the matter was. The priest told him all.

The illiterate scavenger heard him with the utmost attention. "Worry no more, Sir," he said. "Lend me your horse, your gown and a few of your disciples and buy me a false beard that resembles your true one. And that puts an end to the matter."

His heart going pit-a-pit, the priest fulfilled the scavenger's demands. On the last day of the third week the scavenger,



in the disguise of the priest, stood in the court, facing the king.

"Welcome, honest fellow, welcome. I hope you are ready with your answers. Remember, if you answer wrong, your head becomes mine. Well?" the king observed with joy.

"Well, my good lord, I am ready to answer your questions," said the disguised scavenger.

"What is my worth?"

"Twentynine silver pieces!" Pat came the answer.

The king got wild. "Look at my crown, blind fool. Look at my throne, if you have eyes. Count, if you can, the priceless

stones studded therein. How dare you declare my worth to be just twentynine silver pieces?"

"Stop getting angry, My lord," interrupted the priest. "Jesus, our Saviour, was betrayed by Judas for a meagre amount of thirty silver pieces. If that was his worth, should you not consider yourself less in value than the Lord, at least by one silver piece, you being a mortal?"

"I never thought that I would be worth so little," murmured the king.

"How many days will it take for me to travel round the world?" he now put forth his





second question.

"My lord! If you rise with the sun and ride with him until he rises again the next morning, you can be sure that you have travelled round the world in twenty-four hours."

The king laughed. "O God! I wish I could do that!" he told himself. He praised the priest for his wit, but hoped that he can trap him in the last question.

"Now, take the last one in the list. Ready? What am I thinking?" asked the king.

"My lord!" the priest replied forthwith, "You are thinking that I am the priest. But I am his scavenger. I beg your pardon!"

The king, struck with awe

and amusement, got down from his throne and patted the scavenger on the back, and said, "Your wit and wisdom are an asset to us. I appoint you a minister, here and now."

But the scavenger shrugged his shoulders and said, "My lord! I can neither read nor write. I am no good for that position. If you are pleased with me, kindly bear with the good priest who plots no treason but preaches peace and piety."

The king nodded in approval and said, "You get a hundred gold pieces a month for your courage and merry jest. And your wit saves the old priest."

*Retold by P. Raja*





# Well-Fed for A Year

A body-builder came to a village called Ratnapur. He lifted a huge boulder to the great amazement of the village crowd.

"If I am fed well for a year, I too can easily lift, as he does, a boulder," declared Rabin, a village boy.

The villagers made him put down his declaration in writing. Then they took care to feed him well for a year.

At the end of the year he lifted a boulder—but a small one that could have been lifted by anybody.

"I did not declare that I can lift a boulder like the one the body-builder lifted. I only said that I too can easily lift, as he does, a boulder!" explained Rabin.







## JOURNEY TO THE GIANT'S DEN

"My boy, will you go to the forest today and gather some wood? This afternoon we could sell them in the weekly market," said Bhanu's mother.

Already two hours had passed after the sunrise, but Bhanu was yet to arise from his bed. Now he yawned and said, "Mother, why do you ask me to do such dull things? I don't mind even braving into a giant's den, for there is thrill in doing that, but going to gather wood? Well, mother, better spare me of that duty!"

Bhanu's mother sighed and went to the forest herself. When she had gathered enough wood to make a good stack, she returned home. She cooked for her son. After they had had their food, Bhanu lay down again. His mother carried the

stack to the weekly market.

The market was miles away. She took to a short-cut, a way that had fallen into disuse since long. Near an abandoned well, she set her burden down and sat down herself for a moment's relaxation. In the process, she uttered, "Oof!"

Next moment what should she see but a giant popping out of the well.

"Why did you call me?" he asked, trying to make his voice as gentle as possible.

Trembling from fear, the woman said, "But I did not call you!"

"How is that? I distinctly heard a female voice calling me by my name—Oof!" asserted the giant.

"Well, I had uttered the sound no doubt, but I had no idea that



Oof could be the name of a gentleman like you!" said the woman.

"I am no man, but giant. I was longing to hear someone call me by my name. Why are you labouring so hard at this age?" asked the giant.

"I have a son who says he would rather brave into a giant's den than do such dull things as carrying wood to the market. That is why I have to labour hard," informed the woman.

"I am pleased with you. I will give you a handful of gold coins. If you bring your son to me, I will give him more. I have never known a fellow who looked forward to entering a giant's den. I will like to meet your son."

"O noble giant, do you believe that a mother will ever lead her son to a giant?" asked the woman frankly.

"Look here, auntie, the giants of my species do not eat human flesh. Don't fear. Bring your son along," said the giant.

The woman left her stack there and went home. Bhanu was feeling guilty for making his mother do all the work.

Now, when he saw his mother returning with gold coins, he was about to swoon away in



surprise.

But he composed himself and insisted on knowing how she got the treasure. She had to tell him.

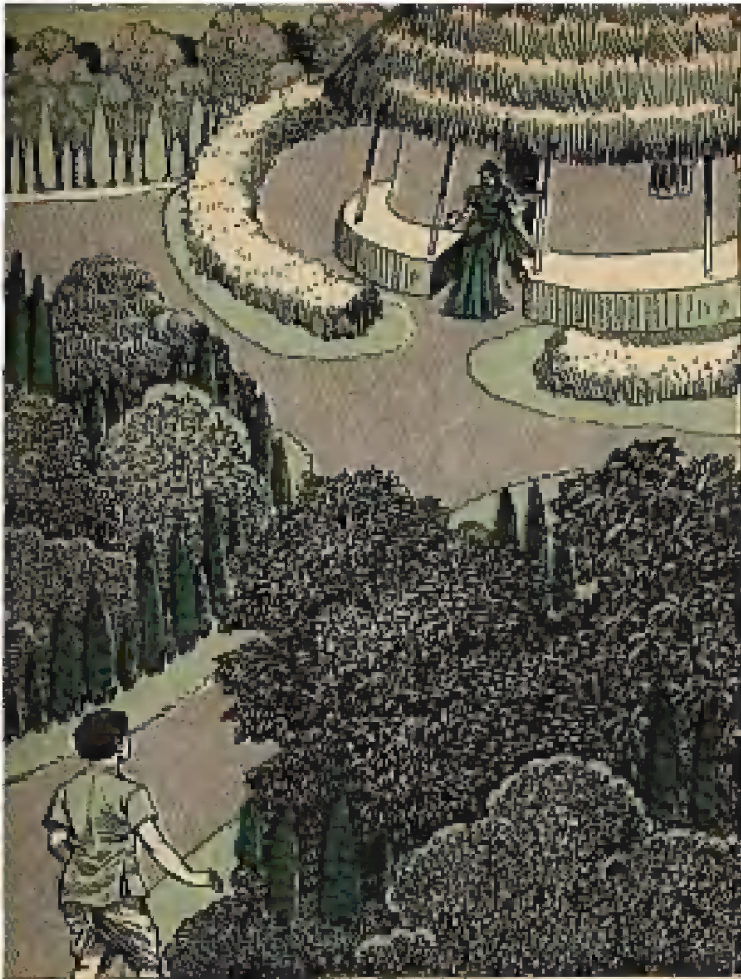
"I must go and befriend the giant," announced Bhanu.

"No, my child, that is not necessary. This much gold ought to bring us much prosperity. No use risking your life," said the mother.

"Mother, all my life I have thirsted for adventure. Now, here is an opportunity to have it. You must not stand between myself and the giant!"

Bhanu rushed out of home. His mother had no other go





than to follow him.

"Oof, Oof!" they called, looking into the well. And before long Oof the giant emerged out of it.

"Glad to meet you!" said Bhanu, bobbing a courtesy.

"So am I. I just wanted to have somebody for a guest for a few days. You human beings are fond of gold. Well, I can give you plenty," promised the giant.

"I don't mind accepting your hospitality. But how do you expect me to live in a well?" asked Bhanu.

"Ha! ha!! You must jump down with me to see how!" said

the giant and he disappeared into the well.

"Very well, I jump!"

Bhanu jumped down before his mother could stop him.

Next moment Bhanu found himself in a beautiful castle, surrounded by a garden.

"Be happy and eat the sweet fruits heaped here. Let me go out in search of my food. But do not go into the garden. If you go, I'll come to know of it and punish you!"

Saying this, the giant went out.

The very next thing Bhanu did was to step into the garden. He was about to pluck a flower when he heard a voice saying, "Don't pluck it! Other flowers will complain to the giant and he will kill you!"

The speaker was a girl. She lived in a hut. A prisoner of the giant, she was required to look after the garden.

"I understand that this giant does not eat human flesh!" said Bhanu.

"It is true that he does not relish human flesh. But the day he would fail to lay his hand on an animal, he will turn you into one and devour you!" warned the girl.

"How would he do that?"



queried Bhanu.

"He would ask you to drink a glass of magic water. Then he will suggest that you wish to turn into a deer yourself for the sake of fun! If you so wish, you shall indeed become a deer. He will then kill you. The fact is, once you drink that magic water, you can become anything you wish to become!" informed the girl.

It so happened that the giant returned without any prey. He offered Bhanu a glass of magic water and said, "Just drink it and wish to become a deer. Then you will see the fun. I shall give you a sackful of gold!".

"What if I don't drink?" asked Bhanu.

The question angered the giant. "I will kill you if you don't!" he growled out.

"Very well!" said Bhanu and he drank up the water. But instead of wishing to become a deer, he wished to become a dove. Before the giant had understood anything, he flew away through the well.

The giant hurriedly drank up a glass of the magic water himself and became an eagle and pursued the dove.

The dove flew on and reached



the king's garden.

The eagle was going to swoop down upon it when the dove entered the palace and flying into the room of the princess, changed into a flower and fell on her lap.

The surprised princess took it up and placed it on her bed.

Bhanu then changed into a prince. The princess shrieked. But he calmed her with a smile and told her his exciting experiences.

The giant, in the form of the eagle, saw Bhanu through the window.

He turned into a gentleman and met the king and whispered



to him, "I am afraid, unknown to you, a naughty young man has entered the chamber of the princess!"

"Really?" the king expressed surprise. He then rushed into his daughter's room and found the young man.

"Come on, I shall try you," said the king and he dragged Bhanu out to the court. As soon as Bhanu saw the giant in the form of a gentleman, he turned into a grain.

Instantly the giant changed into a cock and tried to gobble up the grain. But in the twinkle of an eye the grain changed into a jackal and killed the cock.

Then Bhanu returned to his original form and narrated his adventures to the king.

Soon he went back to the well. His poor mother was still

waiting for him there, nearly dying with anxiety.

Bhanu jumped into the well again and informed the girl about the giant's death.

"I'm so happy! He had eaten up my brother, changing him into a deer!" she said. Bhanu led the girl to her parents, with a sackful of gold as gift.

He then met the king and offered to buy one of his castles into which he could transfer the giant's wealth.

"Why buy? You marry my daughter and a castle shall be yours as a present from me!" said the king.

"I am no prince!" murmured Bhanu.

"One who marries a princess automatically becomes a prince!" assured the king.


The marriage was a grand affair.





## MAN-MADE MARVELS

# THE MYSTERY OF THE BULL KING



While he was working on the site of the palace of King Minos, on the island of Crete, famed archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans heard a sound like a great bull roaring deep beneath the surface of the earth. It was a sound that blended with the crash of falling buildings and the screams of women and children as they fled from their collapsing homes.

The great archaeologist knew well enough that he was experiencing an earthquake, and that the roaring beneath his feet was caused by rocks grinding together. Yet one look at the faces of the Cretan peasants around him made it clear

that at the back of their minds an age-old belief was still alive. This was the belief: Somewhere beneath the ground a huge bull lived, tossing its head in rage and shaking the world above.

The story told how, in the days of the great heroes, King Minos of Crete had imposed a terrifying tax on the people of Athens. From time to time they had to send him seven girls and seven men, in order that they might be fed to the 'Minotaur'—a hideous creature, half bull, half man, that lived below the royal palace at Knossos.

According to the legend, the young prince Theseus volunteered to go as one of the seven men, swearing that he would kill the monster. Once he reached Knossos, his bravery and



handsome appearance so impressed the king's daughter, Ariadne, that she fell in love with him. The princess warned Theseus that, even if he slew the Minotaur, he would never find his way out of the underground labyrinth in which the monster lived.

Since Prince Theseus was determined to face the monster, the princess gave him a skein of thread. He might unwind it behind him so that he could come back following it.

The princess's plan worked. Theseus killed the Minotaur and made his escape from Crete with Ariadne.

Was it possible that the palace of the legendary King Minos might still be there, waiting to be discovered?

In 1900 Evans started his work. Almost at once he uncovered the wall of a building, covered in some places by no more than a few inches of soil. Soon it was clear that he had found part of a huge palace.

There was a vast, paved court, halls, antechambers and living rooms, all connected by passages and stores. The palace was constructed on different levels, connected by stone steps.

It has been estimated that

the palace was built at least 3,700 years ago, yet even today it would be hard to improve on its structure.

Very little is known of the people whose craftsmen were capable of such wonderful work. It is thought that they came from Syria. In the brilliantly coloured frescoes that still decorate the palace they appear as a happy, pleasure-loving people with dark hair, narrow waists and huge eyes—and a people whose religious life was ruled by the symbol of the bull.

There are numerous pictures of bulls in the great palace. There is even the picture of an extraordinary form of bull baiting in which young men and women threw themselves between the horns of bulls and then somersaulted over the back of the charging animal.

Is it possible that there could be some link here with the young Athenians who were sacrificed to the bull-headed Minotaur?

From what is left of the palace it seems clear that the palace was a blaze of colour, for the men who built it were less interested in size and opulence than in producing a stunning visual effect.







## THE CHITTAGONG ARMOURY RAID

Today's Bangla Desh was known as East Bengal before the partition of India in 1947.

Chattagram or Chittagong was a town charmingly situated with the river Karnaphuli on one side and the sea on the other. The mouth of the river had developed into a flourishing harbour.

In the morning of April 18, 1930, the people of Chittagong were seen gathering here and there in small groups, reading some leaflets. The leaflets had been scattered all over the town at night. Obviously a well-organised group of people had

done it, avoiding the attention of the police.

It was a call given in the name of the Indian Republican Army of Chittagong. It exhorted the people to rise against the British and, through an armed struggle, to wrest from them the country's freedom.

"A handiwork of some crack-pots," remarked some easy-going officers. "Who has the courage and the arms to fight a battle against the mighty British Raj?"

But there were others who knew that the leaflet meant more than a mere threat. They





knew that there were some young men and women in their town who were inspired by the ideal of freedom. They were a serious lot and they meant business!

However, nobody had even dreamt that those who had given the call were going to act that very night!

Many a dream was shattered that night. Booming gunshots and fire made the town spring to its feet.

Seventy youths had divided themselves into groups. Their main target of attack was the armoury—the storehouse of arms and ammunition used by the military.

While one group was to raid the military armoury, the other groups were to take hold of the telephone exchange, telegraph office, and the armed constabulary of the police. One group was to raid the European Club. Generally top officers passed their time in the club till late in the night. The youths intended to take them captives.

The Club, luckily for the officers, had been closed for that night. But the revolutionaries did not fail in achieving their main purpose. They took the guards of the military armoury



by surprise. There was exchange of fire. Sergeant Major Farrel was killed. The revolutionaries took possession of a substantial quantity of arms.

From the military barracks came volleys of fire. The revolutionaries escaped while returning the shots. In the meanwhile another group had set fire to the telephone exchange.

The operations began simultaneously at 9-45 p.m. By 10-30 it had been over. The revolutionaries announced that Chittagong had been liberated.

Indeed, Chittagong remained completely cut off from the rest of the country for a full day—



the 19th of April.

But the district magistrate had managed to send the alarming message of the seize to Calcutta. He had done so through the wireless set that was in a ship in the harbour.

Several contingents of army rushed to Chittagong on the 20th.

The revolutionaries, of course, anticipated that. They did not hope to be able to keep up the "freedom" they had won. All that they wanted was to give a moral boost to the freedom movement in the country. They wanted to show that India did not lack in youths who would gladly risk their lives for the cause of their motherland.

They retreated to the Jalala-

bad hills. As the army began firing, the revolutionaries answered with greater vigour. About seventy soldiers fell dead. It was a victory for the revolutionaries.

But the army kept up the battle. Sporadic firing continued for a number of days. The youths were then scattered in different directions and fought in the guerilla style.

They were captured in the course of months that followed, at different places. Their leader, Surya Sen, was apprehended several times. But each time his devoted lieutenants gave their lives and made it possible for the leader to escape. At last he was betrayed to the police in 1933. He was hanged on 12 January, 1934.







## THE SAGA OF SHIVA

In days gone by a king named Bahu ruled Ayodhya. Once he was attacked by a rival dynasty. It was unexpected. Unable to defend his kingdom, he fled into the jungle along with his family.

They were pursued by their enemies, but they hid in a cave which, through a tunnel, was connected with another cave. They spent several days in these two caves. Then they came out and erected a hut in the forest and continued to live there. But the king took ill. His condition worsened day by day.

The queen was pregnant when the king died in the forest. The queen desired to jump into the funeral pyre of her husband and kill herself. But a sage named Ourbu checked her and told her that she ought not to kill herself, for, she carried a

son in her womb.

In due course the queen gave birth to a son. He was called Sagar. Blessed by the sage, Ourbu, the prince recovered his father's lost kingdom. In course of time he became a mighty king.

King Sagar had two wives, Sumati and Keshini. But both were childless. The king sought the blessings of Ourbu. The sage advised them to go to the Himalayas and pray to Lord Shiva. The king and the queens followed the advice. Shiva was pleased with them and He said both the queens will be blessed with sons.

It was strange that while Queen Keshini gave birth to one son, Queen Sumati was delivered of an object, which Sage Ourbu said, contained sixty thousand sons. The sage made





sixty thousand parts of the object and kept them in earthen pots. Indeed, they soon grew into sixty thousand human children.

Asamanjasa was the name of Queen Keshini's son. As he grew up, he proved a menace to all. Often he took hold of people and threw them into the river. A time came when people had to complain against him to the king. The king was obliged to expel Asamanjasa from his kingdom.

Soon the king decided to perform a *Yajna*. He let loose a horse and asked his other sixty thousand sons to follow

it. It was the custom to sacrifice the wandering horse upon its return.

But suddenly the horse disappeared. When the king heard the news he told his sixty thousand sons that they had no place in his kingdom unless they recovered the horse.

The sixty thousand princes looked for the horse everywhere upon the earth. Failing to locate it they dug a passage into the nether-world. There they saw a sage engrossed in meditation. He was Kapila. The lost horse stood behind him. They concluded that the sage was the thief although he was innocent. They thundered their accusation against the sage. The sage opened his eyes and understood what the situation was. Furious, he reduced the sixty thousand princes to a heap of ashes, by a curse.

King Sagar was informed of the misfortune that befell his sons. He sent Ansuman, the son of Asamanjasa, to Sage Kapila.

Kapila was pleased with Ansuman. He allowed him to take back his horse, but refused to do anything to resurrect his lost uncles. However, the sage assured him that they will re-



turn to life through the endeavour of his grandson.

Ansuman returned with the horse. The *Yajna* was performed.

In due time Ansuman ascended the throne. He was always thinking of how to free his uncles of the curse. He learnt from Garuda that only if the celestial Ganga would flow down to the earth and would creep into the nether-world and wash the ashes, his uncles would come back to life.

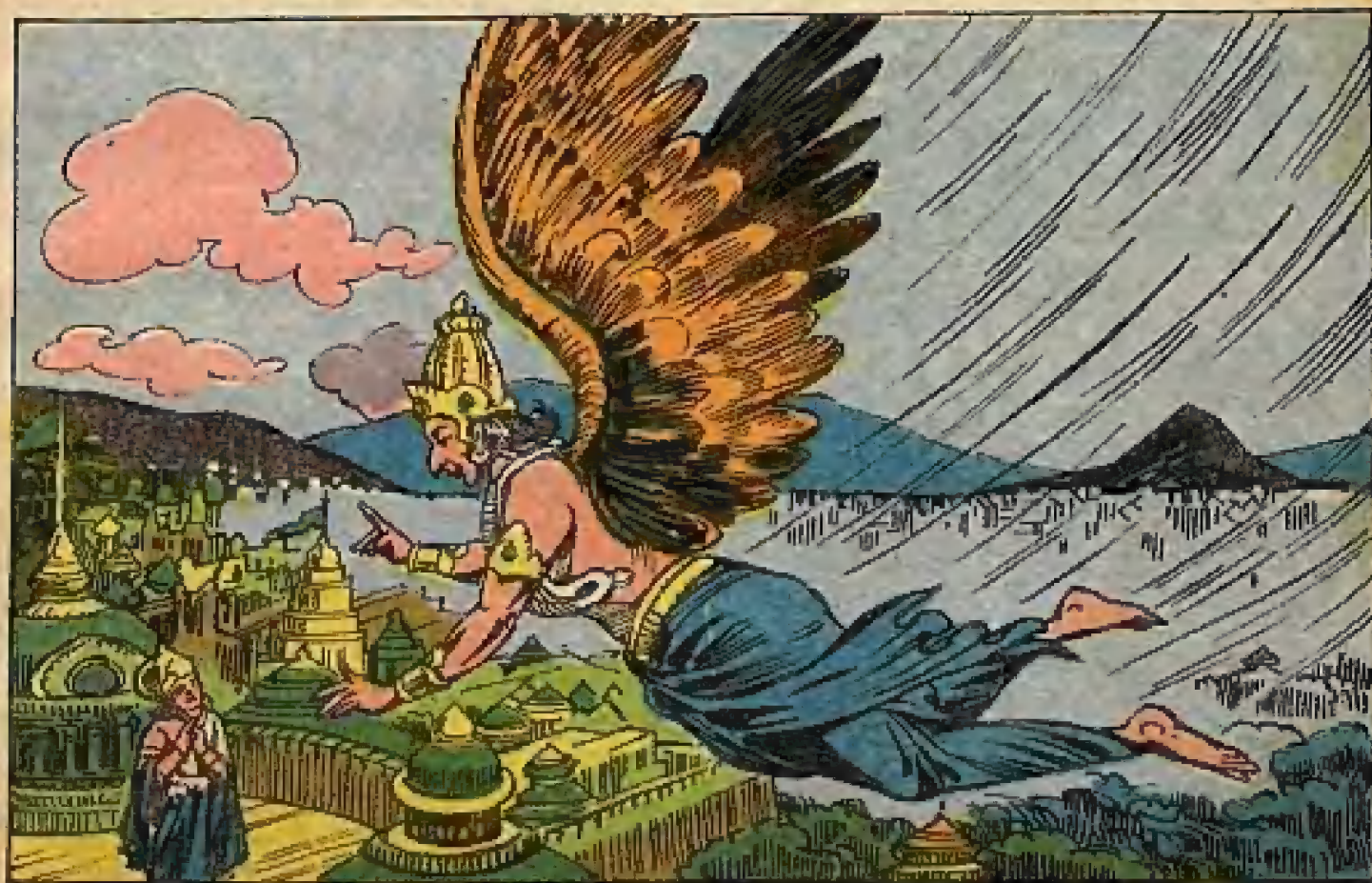
Ansuman abdicated in favour of his son Dilip, and retired into the forest.

He meditated on the Ganga.

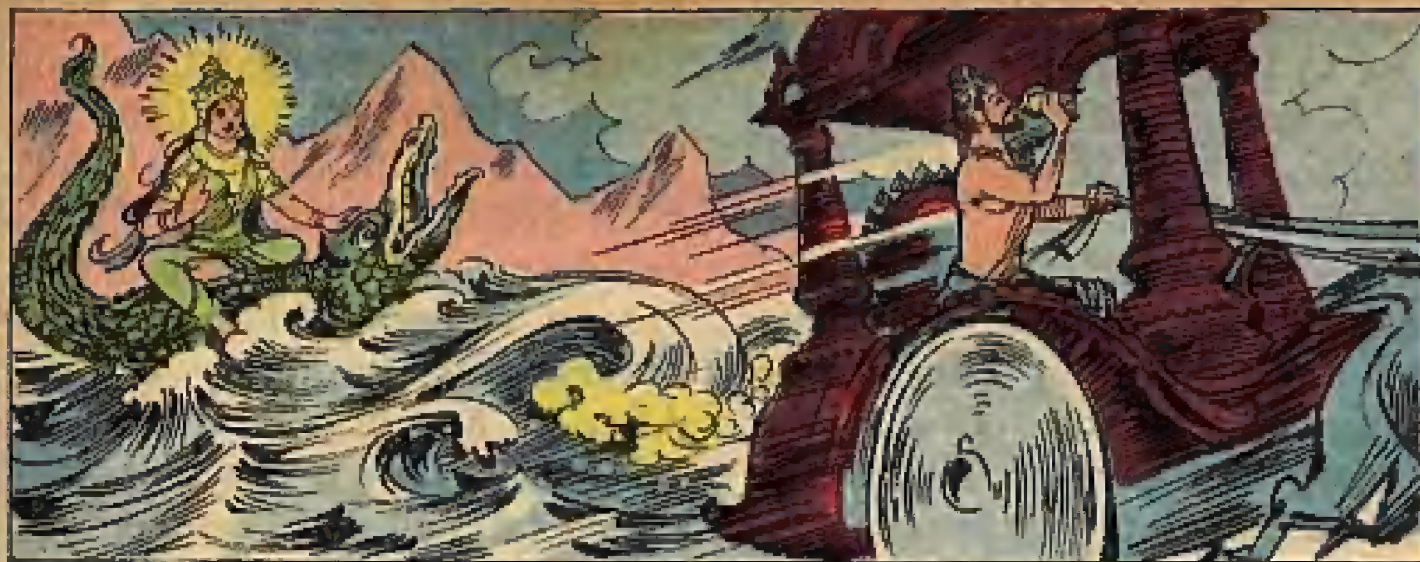
But before any response had come, he died. Dilip had a son called Bhagiratha. When he heard of the incident that had destroyed his forefathers, he was determined to resurrect them. He got immersed in an askesis, praying for Brahma's Grace. After he had obtained that, he prayed to Ganga so that she would be pleased to descend on the earth.

Mother Ganga was pleased, but she told Bhagiratha, "My descent might shatter the earth. How to forestall that mishap?"

Replied Bhagiratha, "I will pray to Lord Shiva, the mighty God, to bear your first fall on







his head."

Mother Ganga agreed to this condition. Bhagiratha succeeded in pleasing Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva stood in the Himalayas, ready to bear the fall of the celestial river coming down with force from heaven. Once he had absorbed the thrust, the

sweet Ganga flowed down to the plains.

Bhagiratha led the flow and let it go down to the nether-world. The Ganga flowed over the ashes of Bhagiratha's forefathers. The sixty thousand princes of a bygone generation sat up alive.

## WONDER WITH COLOURS







## BRIDE FOR RATAN

Mohansingh's neighbour had a nice daughter. Mohansingh met him and after some friendly exchange of words, asked, "Don't you think that my son, Ratan, would be a good match for your daughter?"

The neighbour laughed. "No, my friend, my daughter cannot marry a boy who is known to be-er-er—I'm sorry to say—a thief!" he said.

Mohansingh returned home, awfully ashamed. It was true that Ratan had been once accused of theft. But that was when he was a mere boy. What he had done then was under the influence of bad company. Mohansingh never imagined that the villagers would remember that unfortunate incident.

"Get out, you good-for-nothing lad! Such is your reputation

that you cannot find a girl to marry!" he blurted out when he met Ratan.

This was too hard a blow for Ratan. Forthwith he left his home, and walked on till he had reached the farthest village his side of the river.

"Since people choose to remember me as a thief, better I really become one," he told himself. The same night he entered a house and came out with a box. The occupants of the house were a mother and a daughter. The box Ratan stole contained some ornaments which the mother had bought for the daughter, Gauri. She intended to marry Gauri off shortly.

Ratan carried the box to a deserted temple and buried it under a stone. He then donned





the disguise of a mendicant and lay down on the veranda.

In the same village lived a ruffian called Valisingh. He proposed to marry Gauri. But which mother would consent to his daughter's marriage with a ruffian? Valisingh sulked under the insult of rejection.

It was the evening the next day. Gauri was returning from the weekly market, alone. Near the temple she was confronted by Valisingh and one of his friends. Pointing a dagger at her, they led her to a corner and tied her by the hands. The disguised Ratan understood that soon a priest would appear

there. Valisingh's marriage with Gauri will be solemnised, against her will.

Ratan suddenly stepped forward to the surprise of the ruffians.

"How stupid you are! You are such a lucky fellow that once every month, on this day, gold ornaments would materialise under your feet. But you are going to spoil this inborn virtue of yours by your nasty action!" Ratan observed.

"What nonsense do you speak! Keep away, or you die!" shouted Valisingh.

"Nonsense? Why don't you remove the stone on which you stand and see for yourself?" asked Ratan.

Valisingh removed the stone. To his great astonishment he found a box—one that contained dazzling gold ornaments.

He stood speechless, looking into the box and looking at Ratan. Then he stammered out, "Pardon me, O Great Soul!"

"That is all right. But who is this unlucky girl?" asked Ratan.

"Why unlucky, O Great Soul?" queried Valisingh.

"She would become a widow within a year of her marriage. What do I call her if not un-



lucky?" asked Ratan.

Valisingh, who had been deeply impressed by Ratan, got scared at this ominous prophecy. He let Gauri go at once.

When the darkness deepened, Ratan shed his disguise and went over to Gauri's house. He confessed to his stealing the ornaments. The two ladies had not known about the theft till then. But instead of getting annoyed with Ratan, they were happy that the stolen ornaments saved Gauri from a grave crisis.

"But there is no point in letting the ruffian have the ornaments. Go to the village-chief and report that the box has been stolen from your house," Ratan advised Gauri's mother.

The lady acted according to his advice. Soon thereafter Ratan met the chief and told

him privately that the stolen ornaments can be found in Valisingh's house.

The chief summoned the village guards and searched Valisingh's house. The ornaments were recovered. Valisingh could give no explanation for his possessing them. He was ordered to leave the village.

Gauri's mother came to love Ratan as her son and arranged for Gauri's marriage with him.

One fine morning Ratan knocked on his father's door. Mohansingh was very happy to see his son back.

"Look, father, who is behind me. You had said that I cannot find a girl to marry. Have I not proved you wrong?" asked the beaming Ratan.

"Indeed, you have, to my great happiness," said Mohansingh.





## The Most Dreadful Siege: The Most Heroic Defence

Carthage in Tunis, on the north coast of Africa, was a city of great beauty and prosperity. Phoenicians (people belonging to the Syrian coast) had built it two thousand and eight hundred years ago.

Rome had some grievance against the city. But it was primarily because the Roman rulers were jealous of the affluence and aristocracy of Carthage that they decided to destroy it.

In the 2nd century B.C. the Romans besieged Carthage under the leadership of Scipio. This was perhaps "the most obstinate and dreadful siege" in history. All supplies into the city were cut off. The entire population of the city—7,00,000—went without food for days. Then the Romans stormed into the starving city. But the people of Carthage did not surrender. Street-fighting continued for days together. About 6,50,000 people gave their lives fighting for their freedom. At last the Romans took the surviving 50,000 people prisoners and led them away as their slaves.

Even then the senseless wrath of the Romans was not satisfied. They pulled down every building and then ploughed the ruins so that no trace of the city remained!







## LET US KNOW

*What is a boomerang? How does it function?*

*Sundararaman Natarajan,  
Bombay.*

Boomerang is a weapon which the tribal people of Australia have been using for centuries. It is shaped like a sickle. "The thickness is about one-sixth of the breadth, which again is one-twelfth of the length, the last varying from six inches to three or four feet." It is generally carved at an angle of  $90^\circ$ . It is made of wood.

It requires much practice to use a boomerang properly. When it does not hit its object, it returns to the man who threw it.

When rightly thrown, it can travel up to 100 yards straight before gliding to left and returning to the thrower completing a circle. Its peculiar shape and the peculiar art of throwing it ensures this.

The weapon is mostly used for killing birds.

There is a type of boomerang which is not designed to return to its thrower. This type is used in tribal fights.

If the boomerang returns and the man who threw it is not vigilant it can harm him. This makes boomerang a word much used figuratively. When A tries to harm B by certain means but is harmed by the same means, it is said that A's action boomeranged on himself.

*(Readers are requested not to send new questions for a few months. Let your magazine finish answering at least a part of the backload of questions.)*



# PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. Davideo Kumbekar

Can you formulate a 'caption' in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs .25/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for the February '80 goes to :  
Ms. Vatsala Baliga, 'Sadhana', 604 Third Cross,  
Hanumanth Nagar, Bangalore - 560 019.

The Winning Entry: 'On Routine Surveillance' — 'On Mounted Vigilance'



PICKS FROM  
OUR MAIL BAG

Dear Sir,

I was reading a copy of the *Chandamama* while travelling from Goa to Bombay. Two English teenagers - a boy and a girl - borrowed it from me. They kept aside their comics and remained engrossed in the magazine till they had finished it. I felt flattered to hear their praise of the magazine. They regretted that it was not available in their country.

Lily Bhatt, Nagpur

The *Chandamama* is available in several countries abroad, including the U. K.

— Publisher



# SWAYAMVAR

Seth Ratanlal had paved his way to prosperity through his own endeavour. He is lucky in his two sons too - Ram and Lakshman. They are not only educated and intelligent, but also obedient to their noble father who now looks forward to see them happily married.

Behind Seth Ratanlal's prosperity was the blessing and patronage of Amirchand Bhargav. The Seth looks forward to an opportunity to repay his debt. But, having spent the most part of his life abroad, he does not know that Bhargav is no more.

The sad fact is revealed to him by a priest who meets him with proposals for the marriage of his sons. Bhargav had lost his wife. For the proper upbringing of his infant daughter, Shanthi, he had married again. His second wife, Durgadevi, however,

belied his hope. She pampered her own daughter, Rupa, but treated Shanthi like a slave. Her chief adviser and support was Makhanlal, the self-styled guardian of the family, whose only motive was to get his own wayward son married to Rupa, so that Durgadevi's property became his.

Seth Ratanlal thinks that one way of showing gratefulness to the memory of the late Bhargav would be to get Ram and Lakshman married to Shanthi and Rupa. But his proposal meets with a rude rebuff. He is sad.

His worthy sons understand the state of their father's mind. Can't they, in their own way, manage to marry the two girls and satisfy their father? Why not?

What are their plans and how do they go about it?

*...to be continued*



B. NAGI REDDI PRESENTS YET ANOTHER FAMILY FILM WITH A DIFFERENCE





*A mission  
to fulfil father's ambition  
—to redeem his debt of gratitude*



B. NAGI REDDI PRESENTS YET ANOTHER FAMILY FILM WITH A DIFFERENCE

# SWAYAMVAR

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# RAM & SHYAM

IN A CLOSE ENCOUNTER



AT THEIR WINDOW, IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT, FROM OUTER SPACE-A MAN IN SIGHT.



WONDERING WHETHER TO RAISE AN ALARM, HE STEPPED UP AND GAVE THEM A CHARM.



"WHAT'S THIS? LOOK, A MUSICAL BOX, THAT NOT ONLY SINGS BUT ALSO TALKS!"



"HE'S FRIENDLY THOUGH HE LOOKS STERN, LET'S GIVE HIM SOMETHING IN RETURN!"



A WATCH, A TOY, A RADIO, BUT LO! TO EVERYTHING, HIS ANSWER IS NO!



SUDDENLY, TO RAM A BRAINWAVE- ENOUGH TO MAKE THE STRANGER RAVE!



"GOODBYE, BUT BEFORE YOU GO AWAY, WELCOME TO MORE POPPINS ANY DAY!"



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